

Message Text

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ORIGIN AF-06

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SCS-03 SCA-01 OC-05 CCO-00 SY-05 A-01

OPR-02 EB-07 COME-00 FS-01 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00

INRE-00 DHA-02 AID-05 PC-01 L-03 OMB-01 PM-04 NSC-05

SP-02 SS-15 H-02 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 DODE-00 PRS-01

PA-01 USSS-00 SCCT-01 /082 R

DRAFTED BY AF/W;EWLOLLIS:EWL

APPROVED BY AF:JSBLODGETT

AF/W:TWMSMITH

SCA/SCS:FESTEVENS(INFO.)

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O R 221812Z FEB 76

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY LAGOS IMMEDIATE

INFO AMCONSUL IBADAN

AMCONSUL KADUNA

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 042871

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, BTRA, CASC, NI

SUBJECT: AMERICANS STRANDED IN NIGERIA

1. COMPANIES AND FAMILIES OF AMERICANS STRANDED IN NIGERIA
SINCE THE CLOSURE OF THE BORDERS AND AIRPORTS ON FEBRUARY 13
HAVE STARTED TO APPEAL TO THE DEPARTMENT FOR SOME KIND OF
ACTION WHICH WOULD ALLOW THEM TO DEPART. FOR EXAMPLE,
PRESIDENT OF FISHER SCIENTIFIC, WHO HAS THREE STRANDED EM-
PLOYEES, HAS ASKED IF EMBASSY COULD OBTAIN FMG AUTHORIZATION
FOR SPECIAL FLIGHT SUCH AS USED BY THE WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP
TENNIS PLAYERS. R. DIXON SPEAS, WHO IS CONCERNED FOR THE
SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT OF THE GROUP TO WHICH HIS FIRM
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BELONGS (PRC), HAS PROPOSED A COOPERATIVE INDUSTRY EFFORT

TO CHARTER A SPECIAL PLANE TO BRING IN AND TAKE OUT FOREIGN BUSINESSMEN.

2. DEPARTMENT REQUIRES NIACT IMMEDIATE REPLY TO AS MANY OF THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS AS YOU CAN ANSWER NOW AND REQUESTS PERIODIC UPDATES UNTIL AIRPORTS OPEN AND PROBLEM RESOLVED:

A. YOUR ESTIMATE OF FMG REASONS FOR CONTINUED CLOSURE OF AIRPORTS. ANY INDICATIONS THAT THEY MAY OPEN AND WHEN.

B. ESTIMATED NUMBER OF STRANDED AMERICANS. LIST OF ALL

COMPANIES REPRESENTED. ESTIMATED NUMBERS OF OTHER NATIONALITIES.

C. SOME INDICATION OF ATTITUDES, IDEAS, AND MORALE OF THE STRANDED AMERICANS.

D. ANY INDICATION OF FMG ATTITUDES TOWARD THEIR SITUATION.

E. YOUR THOUGHTS ABOUT ALTERNATIVE MEANS OF TRANSPORTING THE STRANDED AMERICANS OUTSIDE NIGERIA, E.G. LIMITED RESUMPTION OF SCHEDULED AIR SERVICES, SHUTTLE BY SMALL PLANE TO NEARBY COUNTRY, ONE-TIME FLIGHT BY AIRCRAFT NOW IN NIGERIA, SPECIAL CHARTER FROM ABROAD, OVERLAND EVACUATION, SMALL BOAT TO COTONOU, POSSIBLE USE OF SEA-GOING BOATS, SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR SHIPS SAILING FROM APAPA TO TAKE PASSENGERS.

F. WHAT CHANCE OF SUCCESS WOULD EMBASSY HAVE IN REQUESTING FMG AUTHORIZATION FOR ANY OF THESE OR OTHER MEANS?

G. WHAT WOULD PROSPECTS BE FOR JOINT EFFORT WITH OTHER EMBASSIES? IS THIS SOMETHING UN, RED CROSS, OR DEAN OF DIPLOMATIC CORPS COULD UNDERTAKE ON BEHALF OF ALL NATIONALITIES?

H. WHAT IS YOUR OPINION OF STRICTLY PRIVATE APPROACH TO FMG BY GROUP OF AMERICAN OR INTERNATIONAL COMPANIES?

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3. FYI, COMPANIES AND FAMILIES WHO HAVE APPROACHED DEPARTMENT ARE GENERALLY UNDERSTANDING OF ORIGINAL REASONS FOR BORDER AND AIRPORT CLOSING. IT WAS ONLY AT END OF OFFICIAL ONE WEEK MOURNING, WITH NO PROSPECT IN SIGHT OF REOPENING, THAT THEY BEGAN TO EXPRESS DOUBT ABOUT FMG MOTIVES AND TO PROPOSE ACTION BE TAKEN. FURTHER DELAY WOULD CAUSE FMG TO LOOSE WHAT REMAINS OF THEIR GOOD WILL AND UNDERSTANDING. END FYI. EAGLEBURGER

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